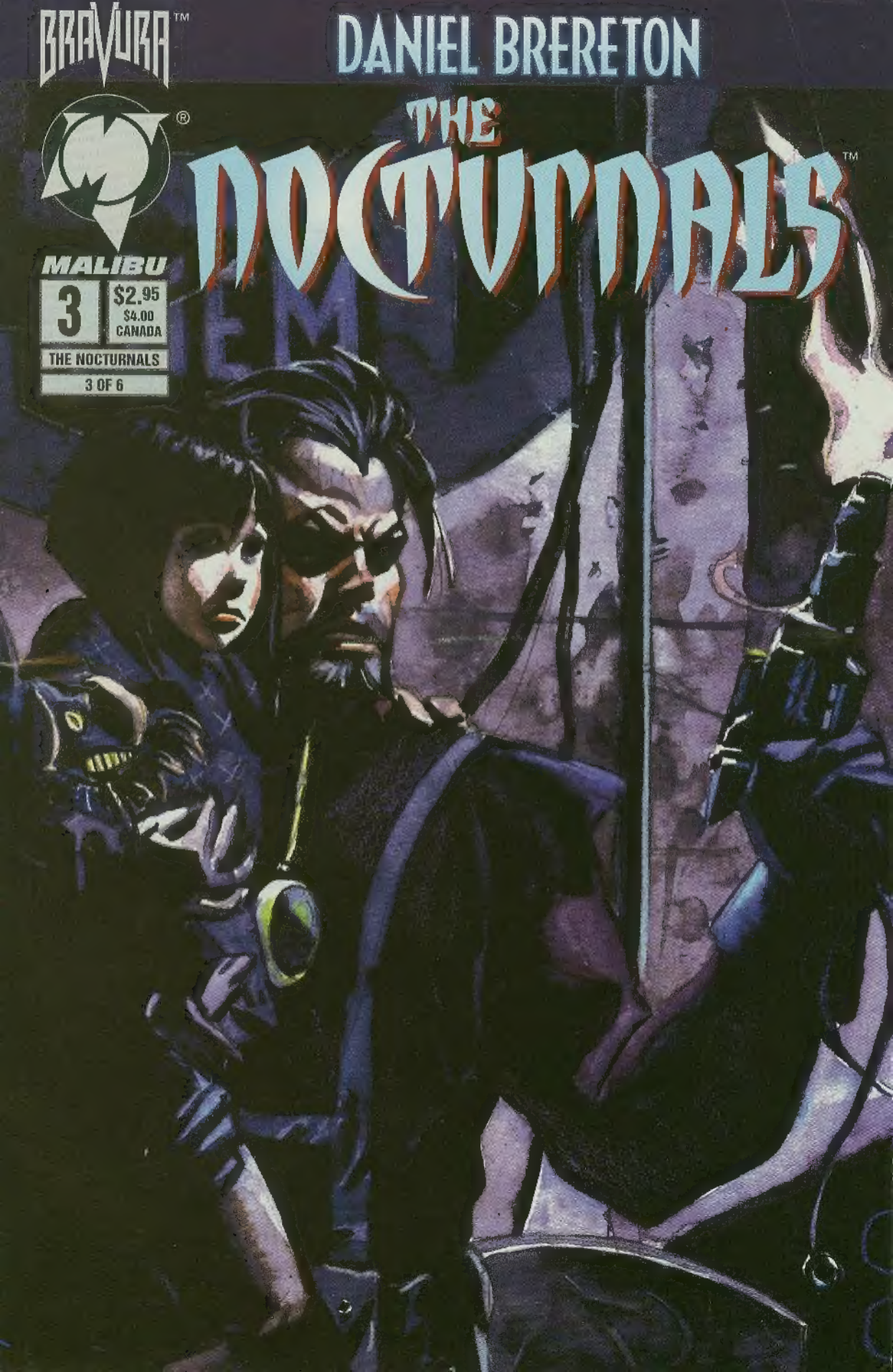
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DANIEL BRERETON
THE NOCTURNALS™
MALIBU
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THE NOCTURNALS
3 OF 6

THE NOCTURNALS™

Black Planet™

PART THREE

WRITTEN, CREATED AND ILLUSTRATED BY:
DANIEL BRERETON

LETTERED BY:
BILL OAKLEY

LOGO DESIGNS:
NANCY OGAMI

LEGAL SERVICES:
HARRIS M. MILLER II

EDITOR:
KARA LAMB

LINE EDITOR:
DAN DANKO

ASSISTANT EDITOR:
LARRY REYNOSA

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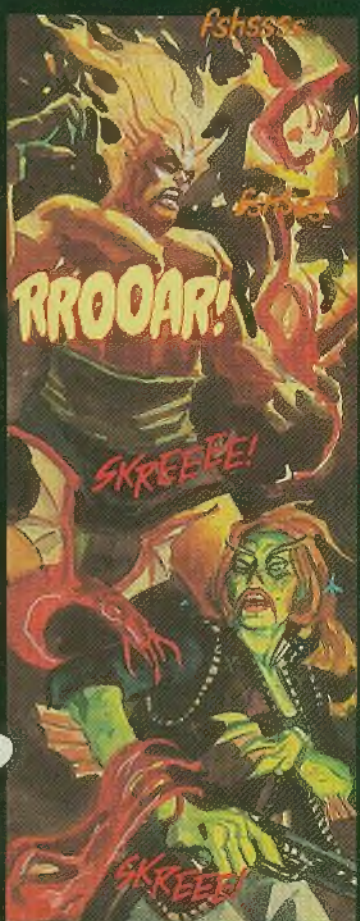
BSG

DON'T LET ANY OF THEM GET AWAY!
NOT...

SKREEEK!
...ONE!


fshsss
RROOAR!
SKREEEE!
SKREEE!

BLAM!
GUESS YOU FOUND WHAT YOU WERE LOOKING FOR...
WOULD YOU MIND TERRIBLY... WHAT JUST HAPPENED?
THE CRIM JUST HAPPENED.
THIS LITTLE FRACAS HERE WAS NOTHING... THIS WAS A BIRTHDAY PARTY...
...WE'VE JUST GRADUATED FROM FUSSING WITH STREET TRASH TO A WHOLE NEW AREA OF FILTH.
YOU MEAN NOT EVERY DEAD MUTT CARRIES FLEAS THIS BIG?
DOC, YOU'RE SCARING THE CHILDREN... WHAT ARE YOU FRONTING SO CRYPTIC ABOUT?

...WE'VE SCRAPED WORSE UGLIES OFF OUR HEELS BEFORE...
K-CLIKT
SIGN SAYS PRIVATE PROPERTY.
I SHOULD KNOW. I TRESPASS HERE ENOUGH...
THE EVER-GREGARIOUS RACCOON...
STILL CAN'T MANAGE TO KEEP OUT OF A MAN'S BACKYARD.
THIS IS MY BACKYARD. I USUALLY CHASE CRAWDADS IN A STREAM ABOUT 50 YARDS THATAWAY.
YOUR HULKING YELLOW GORILLA HAS A DISTINCT ROAR.
WATCH YOUR MOUTH, THIEF...
...THE RACCOON?!
HEY, DRAGON BOY. LAST TIME I SAW YOU, YOU STILL HAD YOUR EGG-TOOTH.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THOSE CUTE WINGS OF YOURS...
...THOSE BASTARDS CLIPPED YOU?
THAT'S ALL BEHIND ME NOW...
...I'M FREE... JUST LIKE YOU.
...NOW WE CAN HELP MORE HYBRIDS ESCAPE.
THE K WON'T KNOW WHAT HIT THEM!
YEAH, WELL, YOU'RE YOUNG AND A LITTLE BUGGY... BUT YOU'LL GET OVER IT.
YOU JERK.
WHAT THE HELL IS YOUR PROBLEM?
DON'T YOU GET IT, FURBALL? YOU'RE A HERO TO THEM.
THAT UPPER LIP OF YOURS IS KINDA CUTE, BABY.
DON'T CONFUSE ME WITH SOMEONE WHO GIVES A CRAP, LIZARD.

...I THOUGHT I SMELLED SOMETHIN' FUNNY.
THAT WHO I THINK IT IS?
AND YOU DUG HIM UP?
THAT IS BUGGED! HA! HA! HA!
TONY LOST A LITTLE WEIGHT SINCE I LAST SEEN HIM!
...AND WHEN YOU DID...
...DO YOU REMEMBER SEEING ANY-THING LIKE THIS ON HIM?
HEH.
NO... I NEVER SEEN NOTHIN' LIKE THAT
'SIDES, A MAN'S CREATURE COMFORTS ARE HIS OWN BUSINESS, Y'KNOW?
SO YOU WERE THE MATADOR ON THIS ONE...
...WHY BITE THE HAND THAT FEEDS, PROCYON?
HE PUT THE BITE ON ME... THE DOUBLE-DEALING SON-OF-A-BITCH...
...I SWEAR EVERY DAY IS LIKE FRIDAY THE 13TH IN THIS RACKET.
THEN QUIT.

UH-HUH. YOU MEAN GET OFF THE GRIFT?
CHANGE MY EVIL WAYS AND HELP YOU RIGHT ALL THEM WRONGS??
DOC, THAT ROUTINE IS STRICTLY FOR THE PULPS.

AS LONG AS WE'RE ON IT, WHAT MAKES YOU ANY DIFFERENT?
YOUR INHUMAN CREW AIN'T EXACTLY SOUP KITCHEN SAINTS.
... WHILE YOU'RE ROOTING IN GRAVEYARDS, HALF THIS STINKING TOWN IS CRAZY, SNIFFING YOU OUT. EVEN THE NARN K GOT A FELLA MAKING DEALS TO SEE YOU GET THE DEATH CARD.

SLINK BACK TO YOUR TOMB, HORROR.
LIZARD-BOY! WHEN YOU AND THE CATFISH GET TIRED OF SAVING THIS MUDBALL PLANET, LOOK ME UP...
I'LL TEACH YOU HOW TO LIVE IN IT.

I CAN ALWAYS USE FREAKY TALENT.

'FREAKY TALENT'?

HE'S GOT A ROUGH PELT. I KNOW THERE'S A NOBLE HEART BEATING UNDERNEATH IT.
I SUPPOSE HE'S ENTITLED TO HIS ANGER.
IT'S ANYONE'S RIGHT.
BUT I NEED MORE THAN THAT TO GET BY.
KOMODO, IT'S YOUR DECISION, BUT YOU'RE WELCOME WITH US.
IT'S A ROUGH WORLD YOU'VE TUMBLED INTO...
...WE COULD USE YOUR HELP.
WHAT CAN I DO?
YOU GOT TEETH, YOU CAN BITE.
UH, DOC...
...WE HAVE A LITTLE PROBLEM HERE...
FILTHY SONS OF BASTARDS... I'LL SEE YOU ALL DANGLING ON THE END OF AN ICE-PICK...

...I FEEL... LIKE A BAG OF WET CEMENT...
YOU SMELL LIKE A BAG OF WET SOMETHING, BUT YOU SHOULDN'T FEEL ANYTHING.
AFTER ALL, YOU'RE A CORPSE.
...YEAH... SORTA HAD THAT PART FIGURED... I SWEAR TO CHRIST, HORROR... IF THIS IS YOUR DOING...
OH NO... I'D NEVER BRING YOU BACK FROM THE DEAD...
...I'LL GET THE BACKSTABBERS THAT DEALT ME THIS DIRT...
...MY SO-CALLED PARTNERS. THOSE CRUSTY MOUSTACHE PETES SET THE TABLE, AND THE RACCOON DISHED IT OUT...
BASTARDS.
STILL... IT DON'T EXPLAIN WHY I'M HERE NOW... A TALKING STIFF...
YOU HAVE ANOTHER CONFEDERATE TO THANK FOR THAT.

WAITAMINUTE ...FANE?
NONE OF YOU HAS A CLUE AS TO WHO HE REALLY IS
HE'S NOT EVEN HUMAN
HE SET YOU UP VERY NEAT IMPLANTED YOU WITH ONE OF HIS SUBVERTIVE PET MONSTERS, AND WAITED
ONE HAND BUSILY DRUMMING UP UNDERWORLD CLIENTELE FOR THE MARK WHILE THE OTHER QUIETLY TIGHTENED THE SCREWS IN YOUR NECK
HOOK NO FOR A WAY TO GET TO ME
CRAZY BABBLE IT'S ALL POPS AND CLICKS FROM HERE
.. FANE HAD A WAY TO MAKE THE FAMILY A LOTTA CASH.. THOSE OLD COUNTRY LOSERS WERE TOO STUPID TO SEE IT
MONSTERS. I ALWAYS WARNED DAD YOU WEREN'T TOO TIGHTLY WRAPPED.
IT DOESN'T MATTER THAT'S ALL THAT A REFLEX
A REFLEX?
YES TONY'S IS ONLY A SIMULACRUM OF LIFE

NOT LIKE THE MAD ALLIGARD'S PROPPED TAIL WILL THRASH ABOUT IN THE GRASS WHILE ITS OWNER ESCAPES
THE BITE OF A CRIMSON BEAST IS POWERFUL
WHATEVER YOU SAY GODDAMN LUNATIC
WE'LL SQUARE UP LATER IN A MUCH WARMER PLACE
JUST DON'T LET 'EM HURT PAPA!
HE'S GONE FOR REAL NOW DAD! I CAN FEEL HIM OVER THERE
GUNWITCH
GO STEAL INTO THE HOUSE OF THE OLD WOLF
HIDE YOURSELF WELL KEEP VIGIL OVER THIS DEAD MAN'S FATHER
SEE THAT NO HARM COMES TO HIM

I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THIS WRETCHED DAY WOULD COME
ALL THOSE CRACKS I SEALED, DOORS I LOCKED
CRACKS? YOU'RE LOSING IS DOC
THE MONSTERS FOUND A WAY THEY SLIPPED THROUGH
DAMMIT!
GODDAMMIT!
BASSH!
DAD
WHAT?!
IT'S OKAY, DAD IT'S OKAY
NO SWEETHEART IT'S NOT
IT'S A RIPE MESS

DO I MISS SOMETHING?
HE'S BEEN LIKE THIS BEFORE. HE'LL MAKE SENSE EVENTUALLY.
YOU'RE ONLY PLAYING POSSUM MY LITTLE FRIEND. PLEASE GO AHEAD AND MOVE. FLINCH
I'LL GLADLY PULP YOU AGAIN
BY NOW THE ACID IN THAT JAR OUGHT TO HAVE SOAKED YOUR GUTS INTO MUSH
BUT YOU CRIMS ARE A NASTY BREED. DIFFICULT TO KILL
DON'T THINK I HAVEN'T TRIED.

THAT'S A GOOD GIRL. YOU'RE NOT CRYING ARE YOU?
I'M NOT CRYING I'M JUST COLD DADDY
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THEY'D START WITH THE LAB
ALL THAT WORK
IS THAT A FOR-REAL MONSTER?
DON'T WORRY EVENING IT'S A FOR-REAL DEAD MONSTER
NOW IF I CAN JUST GET THE PASSAGE WORKING AGAIN MAYBE I CAN SEND THEM AWAY--
MIRROR MIRROR COME WITH ME
HOLD TIGHT, HONEY, IT'S RAINING FROGS AGAIN

YOU DON'T HAVE A CHOICE DOCTOR
GO AWAY.
TELL THEM I REFUSE TO HELP
YOUR LEADERS HAVE SURRENDERED THE WAR IS OVER
OUR CHILD LIKE WEAPONS WERE MERELY AMUSE US
YOU WERE DOING PRETTY GOOD UNTIL YOU MENTIONED THE F WORD
YOU CANNOT RUN DOCTOR
JOIN US MORBOR GIVE US YOUR PLAGUE DEVICE AND WE MAY ET SPARE WHAT IS LEFT OF YOUR FAMILY
THE HARPY WAS RIGHT CAN'T WIN WITH A SINGLE RAY GUN
I HAVE TO GET YOU OUT OF HERE EVENING
I MAY HAVE ALREADY FOUND US A NEW HOME

I MANAGED TO FIX THE PASSAGE, AND WE WOULD HAVE LEFT OUR BLACKENED PLANET
... IF OUR OWN PEOPLE HADN'T SHOWN UP TO TAKE US TO PRISON
DADDY, I'M HUNGRY
YOU SHOULD'VE EATEN YOUR SUPPER WHEN IT WAS HOT
WELL I HATE EE, CAKES
K-CLACK
READY TO DO SOME TALKING DOCTOR?
DO YOU HEAR ME POUNDING ON THE DOOR TO THIS CELL?
BECAUSE WHEN YOU DO, THAT'S WHEN I'LL BE READY TO TALK
MY NAME IS FANE, CRIM LIAISON
THE CRIM ARE VERY OLD, VERY PATIENT CREATURES DOCTOR I AM NOT
WE KNOW THIS MEDALLION IS THE PASSAGE DEVICE UNFORTUNATELY, THAT IS ALL WE KNOW
NOW, I'M PREPARED TO ESCORT YOUR DAUGHTER RIGHT OUT OF YOUR LIFE IF YOU DON'T IMMEDIATELY EXPLAIN HOW THIS DEVICE OPERATES

ALL RIGHT TURNCOAT, I GIVE
UNDERSTAND, IF YOU SHOULD ATTEMPT HEROISM OF ANY FASHION, DOCTOR YOU WON'T BE THE FIRST PERSON I SHOOT
UNDERSTOOD PLEASE WATCH CAREFULLY
CLICK
BEEP BEEP
THERE IS THE PASSAGE
THE ENTRANCE TO ANOTHER WORLD
THE DEVICE TRIGGERS A RUPTURE IN OUR REALITY, CREATING A TEMPORARY GATEWAY TO INVISIBLE WORLDS
EVERY CONQUERING RACE SHOULD HAVE ONE
MY COMPLIMENTS, DOCTOR THE CRIMSON WILL BE PLEASED
INCREDIBLE! YOU SIMPLY WALK THROUGH IT?

YES
DADDY?
DADDEEEEE!
BEEP
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
DON'T BE AFRAID SWEET HEART
THE DEVICE WAS PRE-SET
I'LL FIND YOU
BASTARD
KRAATZZ!
THAT'S RIGHT SHOOT UP THE PLACE.. BUT DON'T DARE FRY ME.
..YOU'RE ANGRY, BUT NOT TOO STUPID

THE GUN SCARES ME. MY HANDS ARE SHAKING SO HARD, I MIGHT DROP THE DEVICE...
...RIGHT INTO THE NEXT DIMENSION. NOW BACK OFF.
BEEP BEEP BEEP
YOU'RE NOT SCARED...
...BUT YOU WILL BE.
I'LL ENJOY WATCHING THE HATCHLINGS NEST IN YOUR ENTRAILS.
BEEP BEEP
CALL OFF YOUR DOGS OR I'LL TOSS IT THROUGH THE PORTAL!
BEEP
I MEAN IT!
I DON'T BELIEVE YOU.
THAT'S IT, CHILDREN... LOVE HIM...

ACTUALLY, THAT'S A GOOD IDEA.
KILL ME!
BEEP
I DIE, AND THE DEVICE BECOMES USELESS COSTUME JEWELRY!
I DON'T CARE. MY DAUGHTER IS SAFE.
BEEP
BRAVE WORDS... POSSIBLY SINCERE.
ENOUGH, MY LOVELIES. GIVE HIM SOME BREATHING ROOM.
WHERE DID YOU SEND HER?
BIP BIP
SHE NO LONGER EXISTS IN OUR CONTINUUM, SO I DON'T MIND TELLING YOU.
IT'S A WORLD CALLED EARTH.
THE GRIM LOVE TO TRAVEL. PERHAPS WE'LL VISIT THIS 'EARTH' SOME DAY.
BIP

I DIDN'T OPEN THE PASSAGE FOR YOU OR YOUR CREEPING MASTERS. I NEVER WILL...
AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, MY LIFE AND YOUR INVASION, ALL END HERE.
YOU'RE ONLY HALF RIGHT.
BIP
ZZRRAATZZ!
BEEEEEEP BEEEEEEP
...CLEVER...
DON'T WORRY, CHILDREN, WE'LL SEE THE DOCTOR AGAIN...
...HE FORGOT TO SHUT THE DOOR BEHIND HIM...
BIP
BIP

FANE FOLLOWED ME?
HE FOLLOWED ME!!!
DOC?
WHO ARE YOU YELLING AT?
NO ONE.
JUST LOOKING BACK. GUESS I LOOKED TOO LONG.
I LEARNED A LONG TIME AGO NOT TO TRY AND PICK YOUR BRAIN ABOUT THE PAST, DOC...
...BUT EVER SINCE YOU HAD THAT VISIT WITH GRAMPA WOLF, YOU'VE BEEN TIGHTER THAN A COILED RATTLESNAKE.
I KNOW IT.
DON'T YOU THINK IT'S TIME YOU LET ME IN ON THE BIG HURT THAT'S TEARING YOU UP?
DOC, NO MATTER WHAT'S GOING DOWN... THIS POLLYWOG'S ALWAYS GOT YOUR BACK.
CONTINUED!